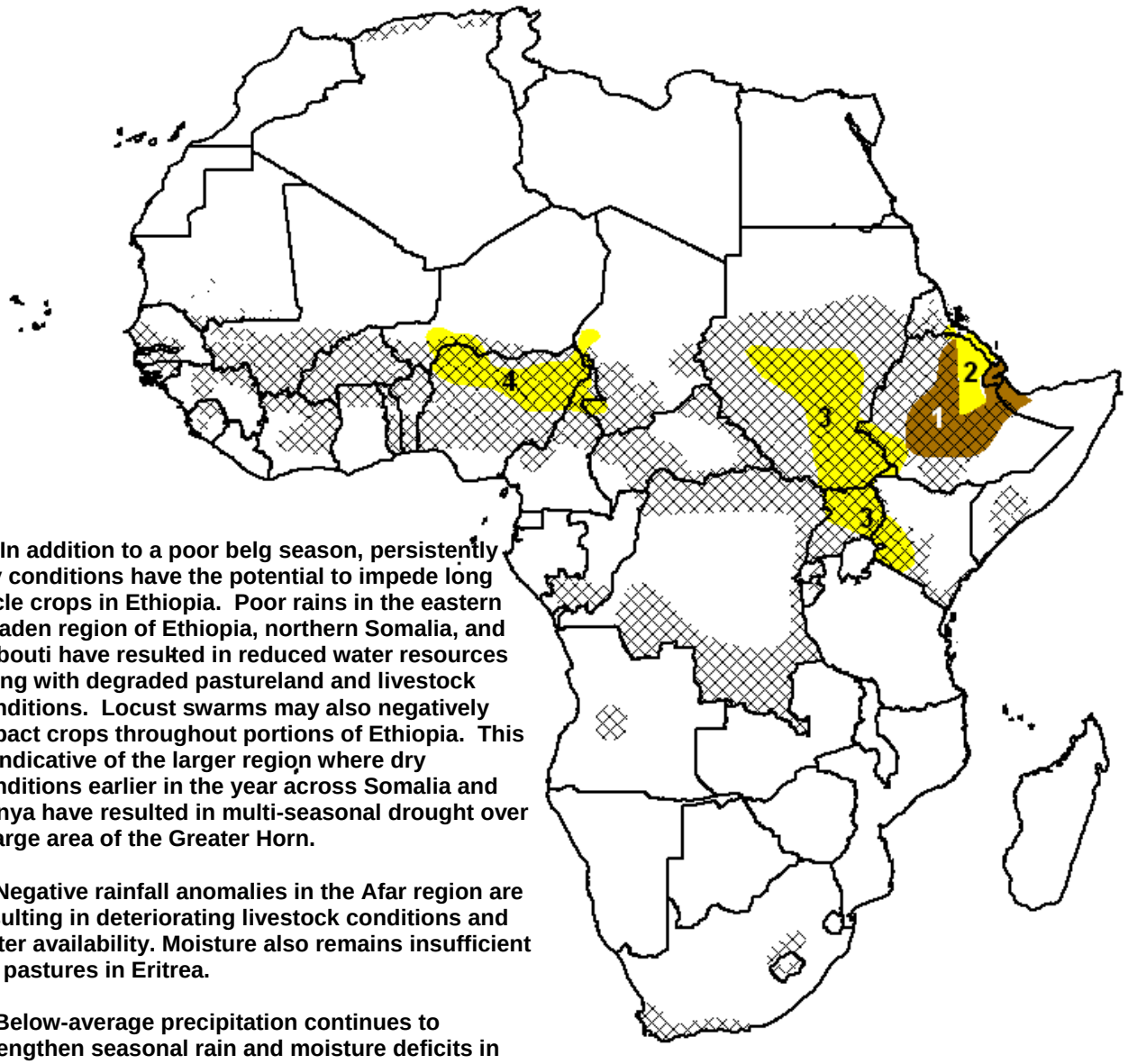
The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa
August 6 – 12, 2009

- **Moderate rainfall totals over western Africa during the past observation period brought improvement to moisture deficits in Niger and Chad, however dryness prevails.**
- **Southwestern Ethiopia has received little-to-no rainfall since mid-July.**



1) In addition to a poor belg season, persistently dry conditions have the potential to impede long cycle crops in Ethiopia. Poor rains in the eastern Ogaden region of Ethiopia, northern Somalia, and Djibouti have resulted in reduced water resources along with degraded pastureland and livestock conditions. Locust swarms may also negatively impact crops throughout portions of Ethiopia. This is indicative of the larger region where dry conditions earlier in the year across Somalia and Kenya have resulted in multi-seasonal drought over a large area of the Greater Horn.

2) Negative rainfall anomalies in the Afar region are resulting in deteriorating livestock conditions and water availability. Moisture also remains insufficient for pastures in Eritrea.

3) Below-average precipitation continues to strengthen seasonal rain and moisture deficits in eastern and southern Sudan, northern Uganda and into parts of southwestern Kenya and Ethiopia. Many areas throughout central and eastern Kenya, as well as northern Tanzania ended their respective seasons with substantial moisture deficits, resulting in degraded crop and pasture conditions.

4) Anomalously positive rainfall totals during the past week brought improvement to moisture deficits in both Niger and parts of Chad. However, the last several weeks of poor rains have led to dryness and deteriorating crop conditions extending from western Niger, across northern Nigeria, and into parts of Cameroon and Chad.

Legend is very general, please see numbered descriptions for details.

- August Cropped Areas
- Favorable
- Somewhat Favorable
- Flooding
- Short-term Dryness
- Drought
- Severe Drought

A wet week in west Africa

During the July 30th – August 5th observation period wet conditions returned to parts of western Africa **(Figure 1).** Southwestern Niger and the southern Chad both recorded one week rainfall anomalies in excess of 25 mm. In Tahoua, over 40 mm of rainfall was recorded in one day **(Figure 2)**, bringing the seasonal percent of average precipitation totals to the 80% – 120% range. About 25 mm of rain was recorded during the observation period in Chad, having the same resulting percent of average range. These rains will greatly benefit cropping activities in those countries. However, in northern Nigeria and the eastern half of the border with Niger, negative rainfall anomalies persisted in the past week, ranging from -25 mm to -50 mm.

Since early July, many local areas in the Tillaberi, Dosso and Tahoua regions of Niger have been suffering seasonal rainfall deficits ranging between -50 to -150 mm. Although much of western Niger experienced a normal start of season, this dryness has resulted in deteriorating crop conditions, and acute failure of millet crops in some local areas along the Nigeria / Niger border. Since this failure, farmers did a second sowing in mid-July. These crops could be faring better. A field assessment is taking place to gain more information on the progress of the second sowing. Further towards the east, precipitation associated with the Inter-Tropical Front continues to be suppressed over the southwestern most parts of Chad since early July. This has also led to depleted ground moisture and below-average crop conditions. Although some of these areas in Niger and Chad have replanted, more precipitation and ground moisture are needed to compensate seasonal rainfall deficits and the loss of crops.

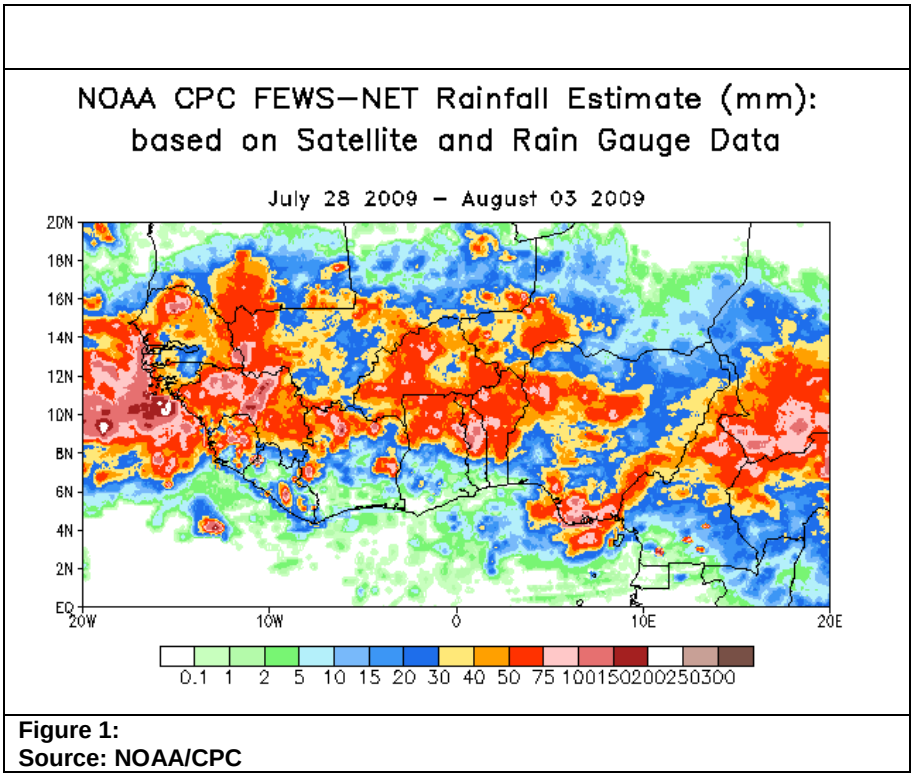


Figure 1:
Source: NOAA/CPC

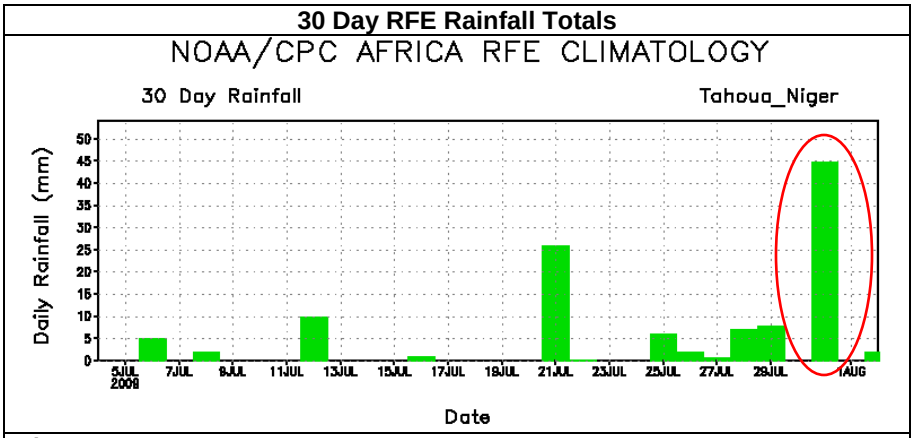


Figure 2:
Source: NOAA/CPC

Dry conditions persist in the east

After two consecutive weeks of increased rainfall activity in the Afar region of Ethiopia, low rainfall totals returned to the region during the week of July 30th – August 5th. One week anomalies were more than 25 mm below average **(Figure 3)**. This is a pastoral area where water availability and rangeland conditions are more important at this time of year. North of Ethiopia in Eritrea, rainfall totals have significantly improved eradicating short-term dryness concerns for crops in the western half of the country.

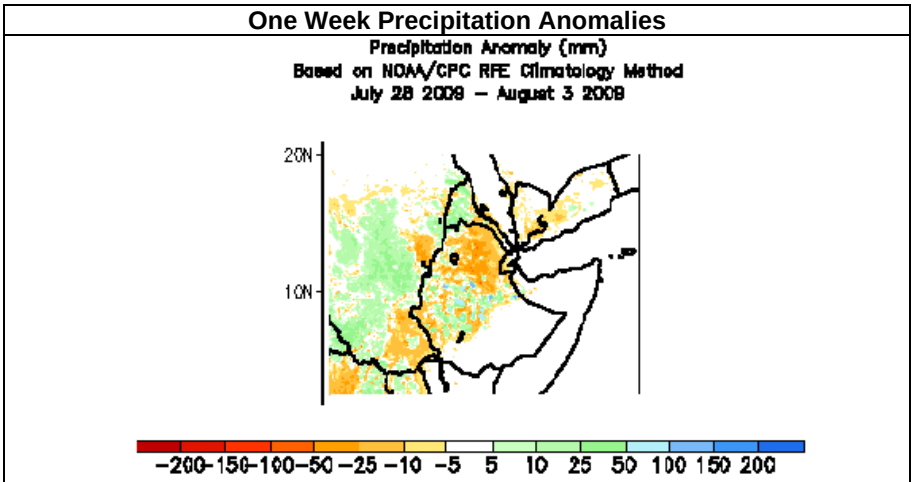


Figure 3:
Source: NOAA/CPC